

Today's News - Tuesday, August 31, 2010

- We're back from the Biennale and will have our own report one of these days (when we're a bit less dazed).
- In the meantime, Glancey, Menking, and Hawthorne offer their (often amusing) takes on what they saw.
- Eyeful of the winners of Golden Lions for best national pavilion, best project, etc. (our fingers were crossed that our fave from the Kingdom of Bahrain would win - it did!).
- Also making a splash along the canals of Venice: Audi Urban Future Award winner J. Mayer H. (and notable runner-up's).
- Heathcote says Strelka is no ordinary architecture school, but "an arrow pointing in the right direction" for Moscow (hopefully - with Koolhaas at the helm).
- Massive mega-project Stuttgart 21 faces major resistance, mostly because of a serious "breakdown in communications" between citizens and politicians: "is the idea genuinely bad or just poorly marketed?"
- Hadid bags her first commission in Baghdad.
- Davidson on the "crop of ungainly monoliths that will soon make up Manhattan's skyline" + the battle over the Empire State Building's views "was over before it even really began."
- Bozikovic finds Teeple's new Toronto co-op is "a building that works. Yes, it looks sexy and impractical," but "it has substance, too."
- Rothstein finds mixed messages in the new Yellowstone visitor center overlooking Old Faithful: "the geyser is so carefully framed here, it can seem almost denatured" (but, for the most part, he likes it).
- Stantec's buying spree now includes Anshen + Allen: the "acquisition is being made on friendly terms, a 'must' for this industry because people are the assets."
- If that's true, what's in store for RMJM, which just lost five key people (and some uncertainty about former Hillier office in Princeton to boot?).

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Castles in the air: From barely there buildings to ethereal cloud walks, the Venice Architecture Biennale is where architects go to dream...delighting us with installations that hint at something soulful and magical beyond the humourless world of "urban regeneration" and architectural inanity. By Jonathan Glancey -- Kazuyo Sejima/SANAA; Kazuyo Sejima; Tetsuo Kondo Architects/Transsolar Klima Engineering; Hans Ulrich Obrist; Olafur Eliasson; Antón García-Abril/Ensamble Studio; Noura Al-Sayeh/Fuad Al-Ansari; muf- Guardian (UK)

Venice 2010: Storming the Arsenale & Rem in da Haas: ...the biennale finally opened the doors...and everyone had their first chance to officially see if people really do meet in architecture. By William Menking -- Frank Gehry; Do Ho Suh; Junya Ishigami; Wim Wenders; SANAA; Eric Owen Moss; Aldo Cibic; muf; Rem Koolhaas/Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA); MOS architects; Jurgen Mayer H.; Hodgetts + Fung [images, links]- The Architect's Newspaper

Venice Architecture Biennale has L.A. flavor: Hitoshi Abe seems to be competing with Thom Mayne to see who can appear in the program more times...one of the most satisfying Biennales in years. By Christopher Hawthorne -- cityLAB; Daly Genik; Eric Owen Moss; Hernan Diaz Alonso; Hodgetts + Fung; Greg Lynn; Marcelo Spina; Sou Fujimoto; Yoshiharu Tsukamoto; Kazuyo Sejima/SANAA- Los Angeles Times

The Golden Lions - Venice Architecture Biennale 2010: Bahrain at the Arsenale -- Junya Ishigami; OFFICE Kersten Geers, David Van Severen; Bas Princen; Amateur Architecture Studio; Studio Mumbai; Piet Oudolf; Noura Al Sayeh [images, videos]- Domus

How Augmented Reality Windshields Could Transform Driving: A proposal from J. Mayer H. Architects wins Audi Urban Future Award...focused on a future where navigating an urban environment is no longer the headache-inducing, traffic-snarling norm... By Alissa Walker -- Alison Brooks Architects; BIG; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Cloud 9; Standardarchitecture-Fast Company

An arrow pointing in the right direction: The founders of Strelka hope that the new school will encourage the kind of debate, research and independent thinking that...Russian architecture and design has proved slow to adopt..."We already have many architects but still have such an ugly city," Alexander Mamut says. Architects have become too servile ("beholden to power," Koolhaas calls it). "Perhaps we can just make Moscow a bit better." By Edwin Heathcote -- AMO; OMA- Financial Times (UK)

Protests Against Mega Project Grow: Stuttgart 21, a controversial project to build a new underground train station complex at a cost of billions of euros...is facing growing resistance...But is the idea genuinely bad or just poorly marketed? ...the city's mismanagement of the crisis guarantees that their numbers will only grow...there has been a permanent breakdown in communications between the city's citizens and politicians. -- Paul Bonatz (1927); Christoph Ingenhoven [slide show]- Der Spiegel (Germany)

Zaha Hadid designs first project for her native Iraq: Central Bank of Iraq headquarters in Baghdad will be a symbol of the new nation...Details of the bank's security features are unlikely ever to be made public but a key requirement...is that the design is able to withstand terrorist attacks. -- Dissing & Weitling (1985)- BD/Building Design (UK)

The Ungainly Monoliths of Manhattan's Future: The Empire State Building is losing its splendid isolation, part of a crop of ungainly monoliths that will soon make up Manhattan's skyline. By Justin Davidson -- Jean Nouvel; Pelli Clarke Pelli- New York Magazine

New York, Here is Your New Skyline: The battle for the soul of New York - or at least for its skyline - was over before it even really began. -- Pelli Clarke Pelli [image]- The Architect's Newspaper

60 Richmond by Teeple Architects: This is a building that works. Yes, it looks sexy and impractical...But this new co-op residence has substance, too. It has the gutsy but practical spirit of Toronto's best architecture...The concept is almost as elegant as the building's form. By Alex Bozikovic [images]- No Mean City (Toronto)

A Cathedral to the Shrine of Nature: A new Yellowstone visitor center looks out on Old Faithful as if the geyser were the altar of a new form of cathedral...But the geyser is so carefully framed here, it can seem almost denatured...this is the tension of the park experience. By Edward Rothstein -- CTA Architects; Christopher Chadbourne & Associates [slide show]- New York Times

Stantec bulks up by acquiring U.S. architectural firm Anshen + Allen: ...acquisition is being made on friendly terms, a "must" for this industry because people are the assets.- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Exodus of executives at troubled architect firm that hired Sir Fred Goodwin: RMJM has been hit by the loss of five key figures, amid claims of behind-the-scenes disagreements over the way the troubled company is run...Insiders in the US architecture community have raised concerns for the long-term future of the former Hillier offices. - The Scotsman (UK)

The Art of Ennobling Communities: Interview with Sara Caples and Everardo Jefferson: These architects have proven time



KK Letter: Work and time off in Beijing: ...working on the installation of the first Frank Gehry exhibition in China...an opportunity to combine work with a short vacation...We will be back on September 6th. -- Foster + Partners; Kengo Kuma; Arata Isozaki; Paul Andreu [images]

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